DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

1. Claims 1-7 are allowed.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

2. The prior art does not anticipates nor render obvious the combination set forth in the independent claim, and specifically does not teach or suggest a thermostatic mixing valve wherein an access path of the hot water to the mixing chamber is completely formed within a bottom base and two ceramic disks, and wherein a slider sealingly slides in a central seat of an upper disk. The closet prior art, Orlandi (U.S. Pat. 5,433,378), teach a thermostatic mixing valve with two ceramic disks capable of regulating the flow rate; a slider; an access path of hot water; and a mixing chamber. In figures 1-2 the thermostatic mixing valve has a lower disc (21) and an upper disc (22); a slider (32) which sealingly slides in a central chamber/seat (25) formed in a pulling sleeve (23); an access path of hot water (17) formed within a bottom base (13), the two ceramic discs (21, 22) and a pulling sleeve (23). In other words, the access path of Orlandi is defined by a conduit (27) that extends above the ceramic disks into the pulling sleeve (23) to reach the central mixing chamber (25). However, Orlandi thermostatic mixing valve's (as seen in figures 1-2) does not teach wherein the access path of the hot water to the mixing chamber is completely formed within the bottom base and the two ceramic disks, nor wherein the slider sealingly slides in a central seat of the upper disk. It would not have been obvious, without improper hindsight, to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the access path of the hot water (17) or the location of the slider (32) of the Orlandi reference

without requiring significant re-design of the valve or rendering the thermostatic mixing valve inoperable.

Osvaldo (U.S. Pat. 6,089,462) teaches a thermostatic mixing valve provided with couplings for separated controls for adjusting the flow rate and temperature. In figures 3 and 7a-7c, Osvaldo shows a thermostatic mixing valve having three ceramic discs (19, 20, 21); a base (23); a slider (14) which sealingly slides in a central chamber/seat (19c, 20c, 21c) formed in the body (17); and an access path of hot water (17a) formed within the bottom base (23), the three ceramic discs (19, 20, 21) and the body (17). In other words, the access path of Osvaldo is defined by a conduit (17a) that extends above the ceramic disks into the body (17) to reach the central mixing chamber (19c, 20c, 21c). However, Osvaldo thermostatic mixing valve's (as seen in figures 3 and 7a-7c) does not teach the access path of the hot water to the mixing chamber is completely formed within the bottom base and the ceramic disks, nor wherein the slider sealingly slides in a central seat of the upper disk. It would not have been obvious, without improper hindsight, to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the access path of the hot water (17a) or the location of the slider (14) of the Osvaldo reference without requiring significant re-design of the valve or rendering the thermostatic mixing valve inoperable.

3. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to PAOLO GONZALEZ whose telephone number is (571)270-1490. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 8:00am-4:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Cheryl J. Tyler can be reached on (571)272-4834 or Frantz Jules can be reached on (571)272-6681. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/PAOLO GONZALEZ/
Examiner, Art Unit 3744

/Cheryl J. Tyler/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3744